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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/SCE MIKE FOOKS AND ANNA STINCHCOMB
DEPT FOR EUR/WE KATE SHARP

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SUBJECT: LUXEMBOURG SHARES CONCERN OVER BOSNIA, OPPOSED TO
PUNITIVE MEASURES

REF: STATE 113894

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, Tom Boughter, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY MFA Western Balkans desk officer Jacques Thill responded to reftel demarche on 4 November. Thill indicated that Luxembourg shares the USG concern over the deteriorating situation in Bosnia. Luxembourg agrees that any transition in Bosnia should be predicated on adhering to the 5 2 agenda. While concerned that Republika Srpska (RS) Prime Minister Dodik is undermining Dayton, Luxembourg is not in favor of punitive measures at this time. Thill said that his government does not believe the issue of constitutional reform should be linked to the OHR closure or 5 2 agenda. Finally, Thill added that while there are certainly some divergent views within the European Union (EU), he believes Luxembourg falls into line with the majority of EU member states, and that a strong and clear statement will likely emerge from the 10 November GAERC. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) In response to reftel demarche on 4 November, Thill commented that the 10 November GAERC is one of two GAERC sessions each year that will also gather the EU's Defense Ministers. While the Western Balkans, in general, is on the agenda, Thill expects Bosnia will dominate the conversation. Thill said that Luxembourg absolutely agrees that Bosnia is headed in the wrong direction and shares the feeling that more should be done. With respect to transition within Bosnia, Thill said Luxembourg agrees that the 5 2 agenda must be respected before transition. Respecting the 5 2 agenda is essential, Thill added, because it would be symbolic of both Bosnian credibility and unity, and would be a strong show of support of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC).

¶3. (C) Thill said Luxembourg shares USG concerns over Prime Minister Dodik's actions and rhetoric. Dodik, Thill added, is clearly one of the biggest threats to Dayton. Measures against the RS and RS leaders, however, is not the right approach, according to Thill. Dodik is not going anywhere and has a seat at the table, so it is important that the RS remain engaged. Rather than punitive measures, Thill proposed that the European Union will use Dodik's own words to push him in the right direction. Dodik has previously embraced an integrationist policy for Bosnia and has spoken of a future in the European Union. Thill suggested that the EU would hammer Dodik on these statements in order to force the issue. Measures against Dodik could also be counterproductive, Thill added. Any such measures could fuel Dodik's populist appeal within the Republika Srpska. They may also alienate other Serbs, who we (Europe?) need onboard on other issues, such as Kosovo.

¶4. (C) Luxembourg wishes to see the issue of constitutional reform in Bosnia decoupled from closure of the Office of the High Representative (OHR). Thill said Luxembourg would

support any plan for constitutional reform, even if it came prior to OHR closure or completion of the 5 2 agenda. Thill added that any such support from Luxembourg, however, would only come if all three ethnic divisions within Bosnia sit down together and reach common ground. Thill indicated that nobody within the EU actually believes the three divisions are ready to discuss common goals, much less actually have common goals.

15. (C) Thill added that, as with any issue, there are always some divergent views within the EU. When poloff asked Thill what were bones of contention within the EU, Thill demurred and emphasized that there is general consensus within the EU that Bosnia is not headed in the right direction. If there were any differences among EU members, however, Thill suggested they may hinge on the speed of transition within Bosnia. There were certain member states who believe if Bosnia feels she is prepared to proceed with transition even without satisfying the 5 2 agenda, then she should do so. Thill assured Poloff that Luxembourg falls in the camp calling for completion of the 5 2 agenda prior to transition and indicated his belief that Luxembourg is a member of the EU majority. "First things first," Thill said, referring to the 5 2 agenda. "We have set these conditions and objectives for transition; they should be met."

WAGNER